

CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

5TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

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March 19, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

I write urging that you expeditiously move forward with the selection of a nominee for Director of the Office on Violence against Women (OVW) and to inquire on the status of the Administration's review process for this position. As we move closer to the expiration of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), I believe it is vital that the Administration has a permanent, Senate-confirmed director to demonstrate the Administration's commitment to preventing violence against women and providing resources and justice to its victims.

Domestic violence is a horrific crime that occurs on an epidemic level in our communities. In the United States, one in three women have been in abusive relationships while one in four have been the victims of severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Every year, approximately 10 million people are the victims of domestic violence in the United States.

Clearly, the need for us as public servants to work actively to provide support to women who have been the victims of domestic violence is significant. In the State of Washington, dozens of non-profit organizations operate domestic violence programs, coordinating with government agencies and utilizing federal and state resources to aid victims. But more needs to be done to fight domestic violence.

The OVW, which was established under VAWA over two decades ago, provides much-needed federal leadership on the issue of combating domestic violence and sexual assault to ensure that every community has the resources to adequately assist victims. As you know, the OVW administers programs vital to victims and their advocates, including the Service, Training, Officers, Prosecutors (STOP) Program, Sexual Assault Services Program, and the State and Tribal Coalitions Programs. These programs allow governments and non-profits to provide direct services, legal assistance, training, transitional housing, and crisis intervention. I believe installing a permanent director is significant: it affirms the Administration's commitment to the mission and focus of VAWA.

1314 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-2006
FAX: (202) 225-3392

10 NORTH POST STREET, SUITE 625
SPOKANE, WA 99201
(509) 353-2374

555 SOUTH MAIN
COLVILLE, WA 99114
(509) 684-3481

26 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 2
WALLA WALLA, WA 99362
(509) 529-9358

www.mcmorrisrodgers.house.gov
www.mcmorrisrodgers.house.gov/facebook

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While I understand that the office currently has an Acting Director, I believe it is imperative that the Administration act quickly to install a permanent director at the office. I urge you and the Department of Justice to act quickly to nominate a Director for OVW, to ensure that the federal government is protecting and serving victims of domestic violence as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Thank you for your consideration in this urgent matter and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Cathy McMorris Rodgers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cathy" starting with a large, stylized "C".

Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress